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R 120549Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2174
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0821
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1362
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3408
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2794
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000455

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KG](#)
SUBJECT: KYRGYZSTAN: RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR SEEKS WWII ALLIES

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¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Russian Embassy sponsored a vintage Soviet-style Victory Day concert, emphasizing the common Soviet heritage of CIS member states. Following the concert, Russian Ambassador Vlasov proposed to the Ambassador that the United States co-host next year's 65th anniversary Victory Day celebration. Vlasov also encouraged German participation as part of a revamped non-militaristic "victory of peace" celebration. End Summary.

Long Live the Great Patriotic War Victory

¶2. (SBU) Russian Ambassador Valentin Vlasov hosted a Victory Day celebration, featuring images of Soviet troops liberating Berlin and Russian martial music, in Bishkek May 6. The event, which our Ambassador attended, lasted nearly three hours, and included performances by folk troupes from several former Soviet republics. Vlasov praised Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) states for their past cooperation, Soviet heritage, and joint victory against fascism. Throughout the event, he emphasized CIS member states' Soviet links -- a constant theme of Vlasov's tenure in Bishkek.

Allies uber Alles

¶3. (SBU) Vlasov later approached the Ambassador to propose that all the World War II allies co-host the 65th Victory Day celebration in 2010. "As the Soviet Union's most important wartime ally," he explained, "we want patriotic songs and performances that would represent World War II for the United States." Following the Ambassador's remark that his proposal was an "interesting idea" to explore, Vlasov called over German Ambassador Holger Green and suggested that Germany also take part in next year's celebration. Green, nonplussed by Vlasov's proposal, responded that Germany had no suitable German martial music and would also not want to recall World War II. Vlasov dismissed Green's concerns, commenting that

"we were all, including Germans, fighting Nazis." Vlasov offered to drop the military content for next year, and instead incorporate song and dance to celebrate "the victory of peace." He concluded that by the end of the war, Germans were also happy that it was over. A visibly flustered Green slipped away without any further comment.

¶4. (SBU) As Green departed, Turkish Ambassador Serpil Alpman, currently doyenne of the Diplomatic Corps, joined the discussion, welcomed Vlasov's idea and volunteered to coordinate next year's event. Alpman suggested including China and Japan in the event, but their views could not be solicited due to their absence at the Victory Day event. (Note: The Chinese Ambassador and Japanese Charge likely departed the Russian event early in order to attend the Israeli National Day celebration. End Note.) However, Alpman noted that Japan might have reservations due to disputes with Russia over the Kuril Islands seized at the end of World War II.

Comment

¶5. (SBU) Vlasov's outlandish idea of expanding the Soviet-style Victory Day celebrations into an international festival of allies is typical of Vlasov's attempts to act as primus inter pares within the Diplomatic Corps. His suggestion to the Ambassador is also not his first attempt to engage in joint events with the U.S. Embassy. He has previously mentioned possible joint press events and work on counter-narcotics, which we have not pursued with the Russians. Despite Vlasov's outreach to us and the Germans, his main Victory Day theme was to reinforce solidarity among former Soviet republics.

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GFOELLER